

MEETING OF THE NATIONAL NETWORK FOR THE SOCIAL AND WORKING INCLUSION OF THE ROMA  
ROME, 8 JUNE 2009

On the 8<sup>th</sup> of June 2009 the second Meeting of the National Network for the Social Inclusion of the Roma was held in Rome, promoted by the Directorate-General for Guidance and Training Policies of the Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Policies and coordinated by Isfol, the National Institute for the Development of the Vocational Training of Workers ([www.isfol.it](http://www.isfol.it)).

A representative of the European Commission, Mr. Claudio Spadon, participated in the meeting, as well as the representatives of national institutions (the Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Policies, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Education, University and Research, the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Economic Development, the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, the Technical Coordination of Regions, the Tecnostruttura, and the Isfol), regional representatives (Calabria, Emilia Romagna, Lazio, Liguria, Marche, Autonomous Province of Bolzano, Sardinia), of Non Governmental Organizations (Community of Sant'Egidio; Diocesan Caritas) and of the La Sapienza University.

The national Network was established as an answer to the need to report the information and the inputs coming from the European Network on Social inclusion and Roma Community, but also in order to give unity to all the experiences implemented on the national territory in support of the Roma's inclusion, promoting the exchange among the subjects that, for different reasons, are involved in preparing and implementing policies in the strategic sectors of integration.

In fact, during the current stage of programming, community funds for the social inclusion of disadvantaged categories in Italy, are managed at central level by different Ministries and at regional level by single regional administrations.

The Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Education are in charge of operational programmes for the European Social Fund, while the Ministry of Interior is in charge of programmes for the European Regional Development Fund.

However, at economic endowment level, in Italy the most considerable resources are the ones assigned to regions, who manage 21 regional operational programmes.

Besides for the presentation of the results of the study visit to the Spanish Programme Acceder and for the report on the latest meeting of the EuRoma European Network, held in Budapest 6/8 MAY 2009, the following topics were discussed during the day:

- Initiatives of the European Commission on the subject of Roma inclusion;
- Information collection and management procedures regarding the beneficiaries and their use for project monitoring and follow up purposes;
- Implemented and ongoing experiences on the subject of Roma inclusion.

• **Initiatives of the European Commission on the subject of Roma inclusion**

Beginning from the European experience, the representative of the European Commission – DG Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities – Claudio Spadon reported on the trends of European Commission on the subject of Roma inclusion. During the last 2-3 years Europe has strongly re-launched the policy of inclusion in the face of an important presence in the European territory both in numerical terms and in terms of economic, social and security effects.

Among the different initiatives, the Integrated European Platform for the inclusion of the Roma, that was presented in Prague and that defined its 10 common principles there, is deserving of mention. Contextually, the multidimensional approach of the European Commission's various DGs for an integrated and coordinated use of available resources destined to the issue was illustrated. At this purpose the Regio DG will soon issue a call for 5 million Euro.

Other indications from the Commission regard the exchange of good practices through the EuRoma network and the announcement of future bilateral meetings with Member States, starting from

Eastern countries. A critical element is represented by the evaluation of the use of structural Funds, due to the complexity of data collection. In order to deal with this difficulty the Commission has activated more effective procedures. Further indications – beginning from implemented experiences – call for the execution of shared actions at various levels of national and local government (concentrating interventions and policies on single targets and problems does not lead to successful results); of interventions inspired by the model of the Spanish Acceder experience, based on multidisciplinary logics and *mainstreaming* policies.

Mrs. Germana Viglietta spoke in representation of the Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Policies – DG Immigration – and referred to the outline agreements/conventions stipulated with Italian local bodies that foresee wide margins of autonomy in the management of dedicated funds on the basis of the territory's specific requirements. Altogether, the resources specifically destined to the interventions in favour of the Roma in the sphere of the Italian National Fund for Social Policies amount to a total of €3.360.000,00. In particular, the programmed interventions mainly regarded the following thematic areas: the vocational and educational integration of the Roma, the safeguard of health, informative and communication activities.

With regard to labour policies, beginning from the consideration that the promotion of vocational integration policies represents a priority tool for the contrast of the particular socio-economical alienation of the Roma population residing on the national territory, the Directorate itself has recognized the opportuneness of activating an experimental programme of interventions aimed at favouring the social and vocational integration of the members of the Roma community in the regional territories where their presence is particularly significant. At this purpose, specific programme agreements have been signed, foreseeing the use of the institutions apprenticeship, of vocational training, as well as the activation of job information, guidance and escort services, the training of Roma cultural mediators to be used in the implementation of job information, guidance and escort activities, the sensitization at the workplace through the involvement of ownership and labour organizations and of the Associations which are locally representative of the Roma communities.

Moreover, taking the Spanish experience as a starting point, the possibility of foreseeing labour inclusion interventions aimed at taking the Roma out of their own context (specifically created camps), in order to favour their work integration within Italian labour contexts (i.e. with the support of the Centres for Employment and of the Roma mediators), is being evaluated.

- **Communication on information collection and management procedures regarding the beneficiaries and their use for project monitoring and follow up purposes**

The representative of the Transnational Contact Point of the Ministry of Labour Lucia Scarpitti, reported that according to what was said during the meeting of the *Management Committee* of Budapest, as far as data collection on an ethnic basis is concerned, a greater coordination is necessary in order to activate the monitoring on the Roma, related to the projects and to the final beneficiaries of the 2007-2013 programming.

For Italy, the interview protocol for the unitary monitoring of projects regarding the 2007-2013 Strategic National Outline (MONITOWEB SYSTEM – Managed by the Ministry of Economy) currently registers information regarding “vulnerable groups” (Migrants) at project and not at addressee level.

The Ministry, having taken in consideration the opinion of the IGRUE Ministry of Economy, which demonstrated willingness to cooperate, suggests that all projects which identify Sinthi and Roma as direct or indirect addressees of ESF projects, should exclusively indicate the field “Migrants: Nomads” during the monitoring stage, in order to avoid that interventions in favour of such populations appear distributed in many categories. This will allow the collection of more homogeneous and reliable data on the projects of the 2007-2013 Funds and at the same time guarantee the privacy of the addressees.

During the course of the discussion a proposal, accepted by all, that the field be named “Roma and Sinthi” without reference to the migrant character of the population, was brought forth.

- **Implemented and ongoing experiences on the subject of Roma inclusion**

With regard to experiences in the implementation stage, the Department of Equal Opportunities (Unar) is currently involved in the implementation of a 3 million Euro project (in the sphere of the PON Governance Axis D, Specific Objective 4.2, Action 6), which aims at improving ethnic-racial anti-discrimination policies. The project foresees the implementation of a research which, besides for the world of associations, also involves the Regions of the Convergence Objective. During the initial stage, the project will carry out a mapping of the institutions, services and actions, whose results will be presented on the occasion of a seminar that will be held in January 2010. The representative of the Ministry of Interior has also informed that a training project addressed to the social assistants of the Prefectures is being currently discussed, within a ministerial commission. Once the project is approved the call will be published.